

MARVEL
LIMITED SERIES
4 of 4

SPIDER-MAN[®] AND THE FANTASTIC FOUR[®]

CHRISTOS
GAGE

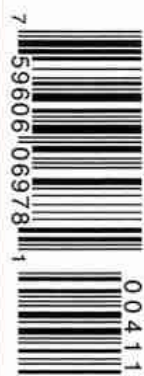
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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

Fantastic Four

THE LEGACIES OF BOTH SPIDER-MAN AND THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAVE BEEN INTERTWINED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THEIR RESPECTIVE CAREERS. IN ONE OF HIS FIRST MISSIONS, THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN TRIED TO JOIN THE FANTASTIC FOUR. SINCE THEN, THEY'VE VIEWED THE WEBBED WONDER AS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY – A SURROGATE SON WHOM THEY'VE FOUGHT ALONGSIDE AND WHO, WHEN TROUBLE HAS ARISEN AND THE FF'S NUMBERS HAVE DEPLETED, HAS ABLY STEPPED IN TO JOIN THE TEAM ON ADVENTURES.

BUT YOU DON'T BECOME FIVE OF THE GREATEST HEROES A WORLD'S EVER SEEN WITHOUT MAKING A FEW ENEMIES. AND ACROSS THEIR VAST HISTORY, VILLAINS BOTH BOLD AND SURREPTITIOUS HAVE MADE THEIR MARK ON THE LIVES OF THESE FIVE HEROES. ONE PARTICULAR MENACE, WHO'S KEPT HIS IDENTITY SHROUDED IN MYSTERY, HAS BEEN ON A MOST DEADLY MISSION THROUGH TIME AND ACROSS THE BACKDROP OF SOME OF THE FF AND SPIDEY'S GREATEST ADVENTURES. WHO HE IS REMAINS TO BE SEEN, BUT HE CLEARLY HAS DIRE PLANS FOR THE LIVES OF THESE FIVE LEGENDS – PLANS THAT ARE ABOUT TO UNFOLD!

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THE BAXTER BUILDING. TODAY.

...CAN'T READ MY,
CAN'T READ MY,
NO HE CAN'T READ
MY POKER FACE...

P-P-P-POKER
FACE, P-P-POKER
FACE... MUM
MUM MUM--



--MAHH!

WHAT IN THE
NAME 'A BROADWAY
JOE NAMATH DO YA THINK
YER DOIN', SCARIN' THE
DAYLIGHTS OUTTA THE
IDOL 'A MILLIONS
LIKE THAT?

WELL, ASIDE FROM FINDING
A WAY IN THAT DOESN'T
INVOLVE BEING ZAPPED
BY LASERS, I'M GETTING
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS
I NEVER REALLY
WANTED TO ASK.

(IN OTHER
WORDS, YOUR
TOWEL'S
SLIPPING.)

SERIOUSLY,
I GOT A MESSAGE
THE FANTASTIC FOUR
NEEDED MY HELP.

URGENTLY.



YEAH?
WHAT KINDA
MESSAGE?

A TEXT.

LOOK AT
MY FINGERS!
DO I LOOK
LIKE I TEXT?

THE INVISIBLE WOMAN.



TEXT?
NO... I'VE BEEN
PLAYING WITH
FRANKLIN AND
VALERIA.

HEY, SPIDEY!
WANNA TRY THE
INVISIBLE MONKEY
BARS?

ACTUALLY,
I KINDA DO... BUT
LET ME CHECK WITH
THE OTHERS
FIRST.

IT *HAD* TO
COME FROM HERE.
I KNOW REED'S MADE SURE
THE BAXTER BUILDING'S
COMM SYSTEMS ARE
IMPOSSIBLE TO CLONE
OR FAKE.

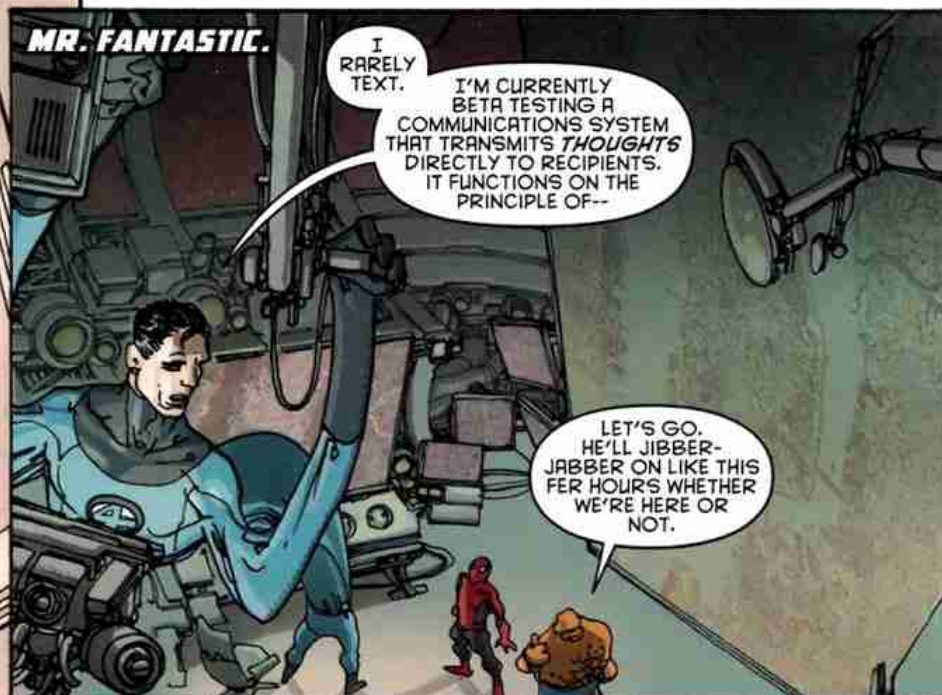
SURE, *OUR*
STUFF'S HACK-PROOF.
BUT I'M GUESSIN' *YOU*
GOT YER CELL PHONE
FREE WITH THE PURCHASE
OF A BARRY MANILOW
RING TONE.

NEIL
DIAMOND.

YEAH, WELL,
SOMEONE'S PLAYIN'
A JOKE ON YA, 'CAUSE
IT'S A RARE QUIET
NIGHT AROUND
HERE.

BUT C'MON,
SEE FER
YERSELF...

MR. FANTASTIC.

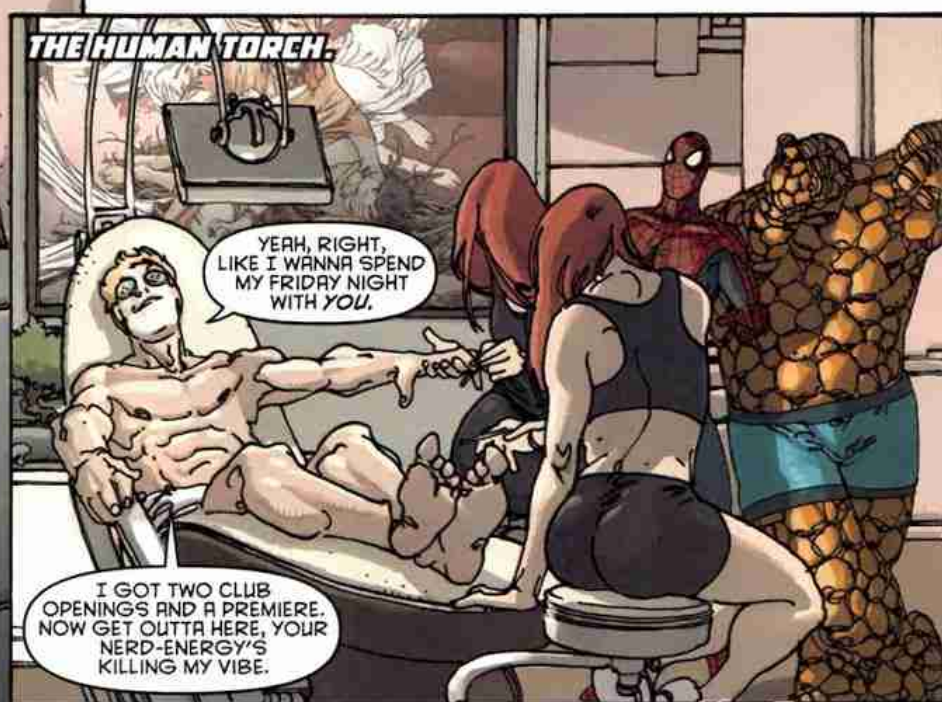


I
RARELY
TEXT.

I'M CURRENTLY
BETA TESTING A
COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM
THAT TRANSMITS *THOUGHTS*
DIRECTLY TO RECIPIENTS.
IT FUNCTIONS ON THE
PRINCIPLE OF--

LET'S GO.
HE'LL JIBBER-
JABBER ON LIKE THIS
FER HOURS WHETHER
WE'RE HERE OR
NOT.

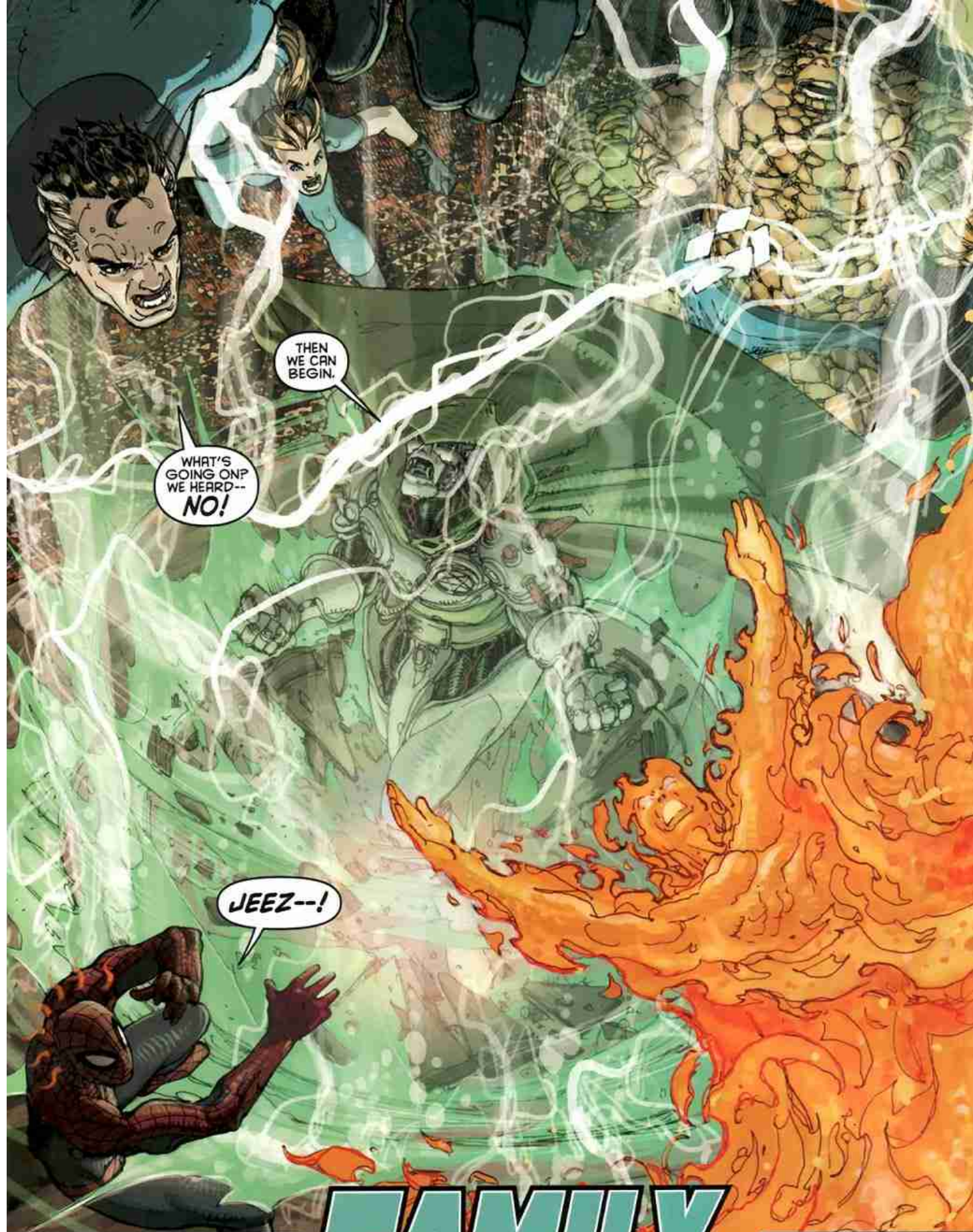
THE HUMAN TORCH.



YEAH, RIGHT,
LIKE I WANNA SPEND
MY FRIDAY NIGHT
WITH *YOU*.

I GOT TWO CLUB
OPENINGS AND A PREMIERE.
NOW GET OUTTA HERE, YOUR
NERD-ENERGY'S
KILLING MY VIBE.





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*THEN I RETURNED TO AN EVENT I *KNEW* I COULD ALTER, FOR IT WAS *I* WHO SET IT IN MOTION...THE INFILTRATION OF YOUR HEADQUARTERS IN PREPARATION FOR MY FIRST ATTACK.

*I DIVERTED ONE OF MY YOUNGER SELF'S PROBES, DIRECTING IT TO RELEASE THE ALIEN SYMBIOTE YOU KEPT PRISONER, SO I MIGHT OBTAIN A *SAMPLE* OF IT...

*...USING IT TO CREATE A BIOLOGICAL WEAPON THAT I SOLD TO VON DOOM THROUGH PROXIES.

*A '*VENOM BOMB*' WHOSE DEPLOYMENT I LATER ARRANGED ON *AMERICAN SOIL*... KNOWING IT WOULD BE TRACED BACK TO DOOM.*

*SEE MIGHTY AVENGERS VOLUME 2: VENOM BOMB! --TIME TRAVELIN' TOM

*AND I NEARLY *SUCCEEDED*. IT LED TO HIS ARREST AND INCARCERATION.

*BUT THE MADMAN *NORMAN OSBORN* RETURNED HIM TO HIS THRONE, AND IT BECAME CLEAR TO ME THAT SUBTERFUGE WAS INADEQUATE. TO DEFEAT DOOM ONCE AND FOR ALL...

*...I WOULD HAVE TO CONFRONT HIM *DIRECTLY*. AND KILL HIM.

*I USED THE TIME MACHINE FOR ONE FINAL JOURNEY, TO *MONSTER ISLAND*. AFTER ARRANGING A SUITABLE DIVERSION...

*...I TOOK A SAMPLE OF THE ALIEN TECHNO-TROID'S IMPENETRABLE METAL HIDE, BEFORE IT HAD FULLY MATURED TO ITS INVULNERABLE STATE.

*ANALYZING ITS COMPOSITION, I CREATED NEW, VIRTUALLY *INDESTRUCTIBLE* ARMOR, MAKING ME NOT JUST DOOM'S EQUAL... BUT HIS *SUPERIOR*."



BUT WE CAN
STILL HELP YOU,
SON. AND YOU
NEED IT.

YOU'VE BEEN
STUDYING ADVANCED
MAGIC WITHOUT A MENTOR.
THAT'S *INCREDIBLY*
DANGEROUS. IT'S A MIRACLE
YOU'RE *ALIVE*. BUT IT'S
CLEARLY *AFFECTED*
YOU...

...AFFECTED
YOUR *MIND*.

YOU
THINK I'M...
MAD?

SHLANK

HOW
DARE
YOU!



I HAVE NEITHER
THE TIME NOR
INCLINATION TO
DEBATE MY
INFERIORS!

IF YOU WON'T
COME WILLINGLY,
I'LL *SUBDUE* YOU
AND BEND YOU TO
MY WILL BY
SORCERY!



THERE'S ONE
MAGIC WORD
I HAVEN'T HEARD
YOU TRY:
"PLEASE."

(NOT THAT
IT WOULD WORK,
BUT SERIOUSLY, THE
LACK OF MANNERS
IN KIDS THESE
DAYS!)



KRISTOFF,
STOP THIS.
BEFORE SOME-
ONE GETS
HURT.

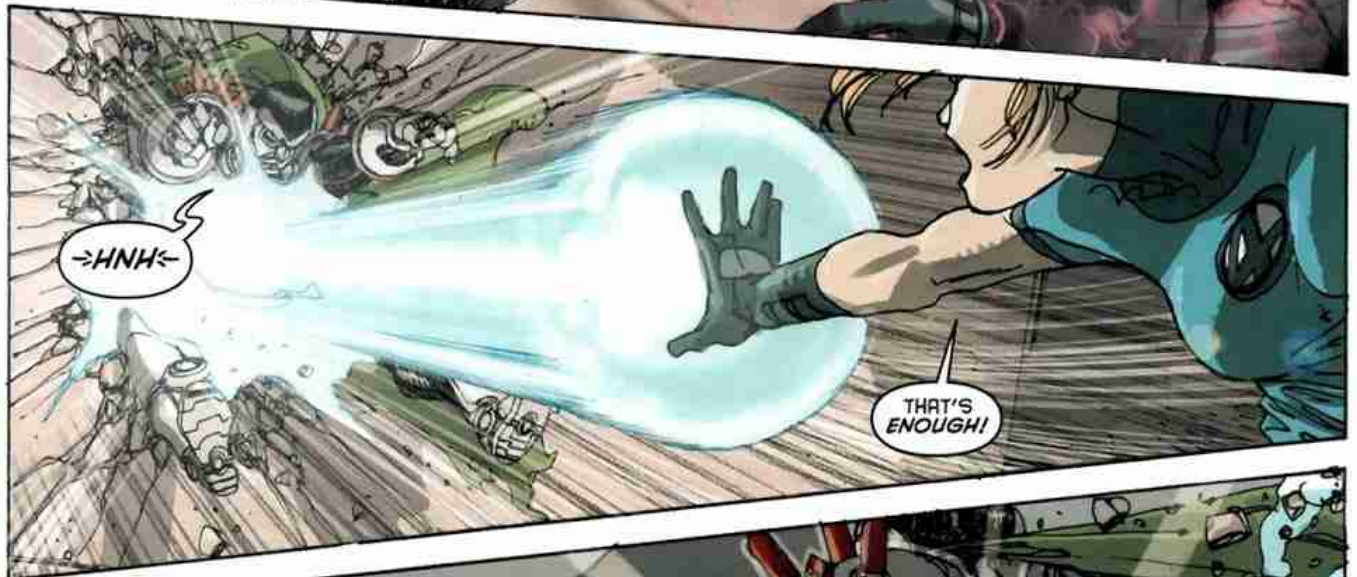
YOU *KNOW* THIS
IS WRONG. LOOK AT
YOU. YOU'RE *AFRAID*
TO FACE DOOM BY YOURSELF.
AND YOU *SHOULD* BE.
LET US--

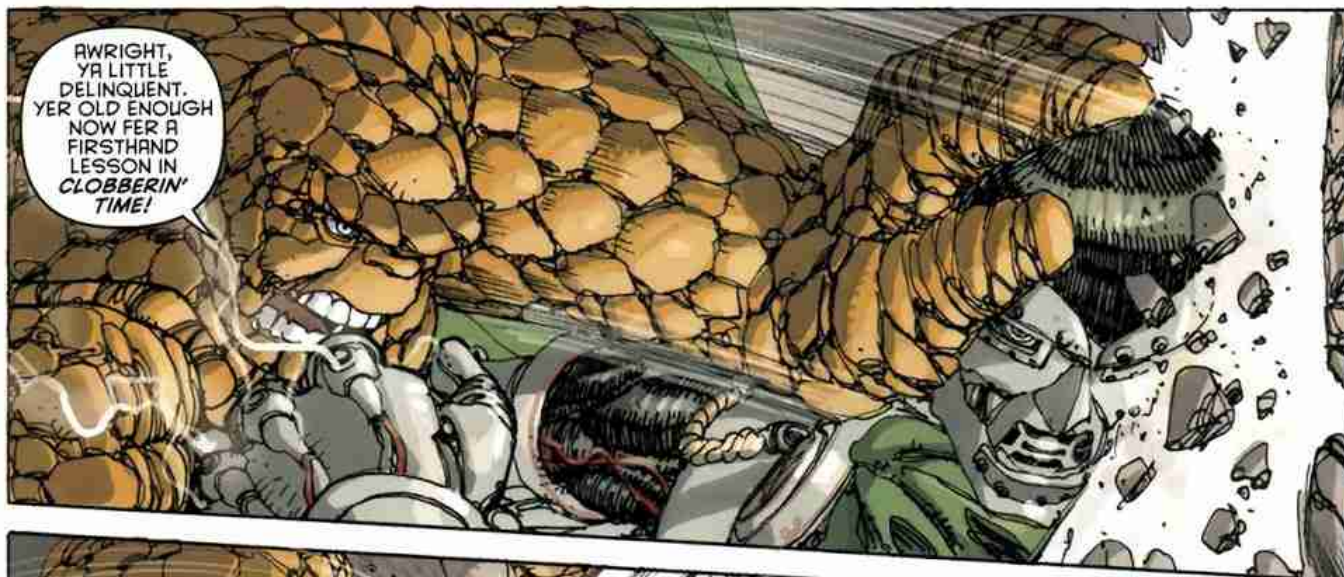
AFRAID?

NEVER!

DOOM IS
NOTHING TO ME!
I AM NO LONGER
HIS SHADOW! NO
LONGER SOME PALE
IMITATION!







AWRIGHT,
YA LITTLE
DELINQUENT.
YER OLD ENOUGH
NOW FER A
FIRSTHAND
LESSON IN
CLOBBERIN'
TIME!



BRUTE.

MY ARMOR
MAY NOT MAKE
ME YOUR EQUAL, BUT
I AM ABLE TO HOLD MY
OWN...AND UNLIKE DOOM,
I DO NOT CONSIDER
SUCH COMBAT
BENEATH ME.



IT BRINGS ME
CLOSE ENOUGH
TO EXPLOIT YOUR
VULNERABILITIES.

RRRAAGGHH



I DON'T CARE
WHAT KINDA METAL
YOU'RE SPORTING. IF I
MAKE IT HOT ENOUGH,
EITHER IT MELTS...
OR YOU DO.

AND SO
YOU SHOW YOUR
TRUE COLORS!
FOR ALL YOUR SMUG
AIRS OF MORAL
SUPERIORITY, FOR ALL
YOUR CLAIMS OF
HEROISM AND
MERCY...

...WHEN FACED
WITH A **TRUE**
CHALLENGE, YOU ARE
NO DIFFERENT THAN
DOOM HIMSELF! THE
LIVES OF OTHERS
ARE **NOTHING**
TO YOU!



YOU CARE ONLY FOR YOURSELVES! YOUR IDEALS ARE CAST ASIDE THE MOMENT YOUR POWER IS THREATENED!

AND ALL YOUR LIES ARE EXPOSED!



SPIDEY... I GOT IT... I KNOW WHAT HIS BEEF IS. STALL 'IM...



I'LL DO MY BEST. BUT I GOTTA TELL YA, BEN...

...WHATEVER YOU'RE DOING, I'D HURRY.



COWARDS!

YOU, AT LEAST, FACE DEATH WITH NOBILITY, SPIDER-MAN.

WHILE THE THING FLEES LIKE THE ANIMAL I ALWAYS KNEW HIM TO BE.



YEAH, THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE THE BENJY I KNOW. IF HE'S RUNNING, HE'S RUNNING TOWARD SOMETHING.

AND I GOTTA BUY HIM TIME...



...NUTS.

I HAVE DEFEATED THE FANTASTIC FOUR, SPIDER-MAN. YOU PRESENT LITTLE CHALLENGE.

THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO SUFFER. SURRENDER NOW.



THINK I'LL PASS. 'CAUSE I JUST FIGURED OUT WHAT BEN WAS GOING FOR.

WHATEVER WEAPON YOU'RE AFTER, IT WILL CHANGE NOTHING.

THWIP



IT'S NOT A WEAPON, PAL. AND MAYBE IT WON'T CHANGE ANYTHING.

BUT IT'LL PROVE YOU'RE *WRONG*.



I LOST MY PARENTS WHEN I WAS A KID. I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE. HOW YOU GET MAD AT THE WORLD AND EVERYONE IN IT.

I WAS LUCKY... I HAD PEOPLE WHO CARED FOR ME. WHO GAVE ME A FAMILY. A SAFE PLACE, WHERE I WAS LOVED. AND IT LOOKS TO ME...



...LIKE YOU WERE LUCKY TOO.

I MEAN, I GET IT. AT FIRST YOU *DIDN'T* HAVE A FAMILY, YOU HAD *DOOM*. MOLDING YOU INTO HIS LITTLE MINI-ME. AND THAT SUCKS.

BUT THE FF TOOK YOU IN. THEY WERE THE CLOSEST THING YOU HAD TO FAMILY SINCE YOU LOST YOUR FOLKS.

AND IT SEEMS LIKE THEY FELT THE SAME WAY ABOUT YOU.



THEY KEPT... PHOTOGRAPHS OF ME?

IN THEIR FAMILY ALBUMS. WITH THE BIRTHDAYS AND VACATIONS AND ANNIVERSARIES.

YOU REALLY WANT TO DO THIS TO THE ONLY PEOPLE ON EARTH WHO'VE REALLY *CARED* ABOUT YOU?

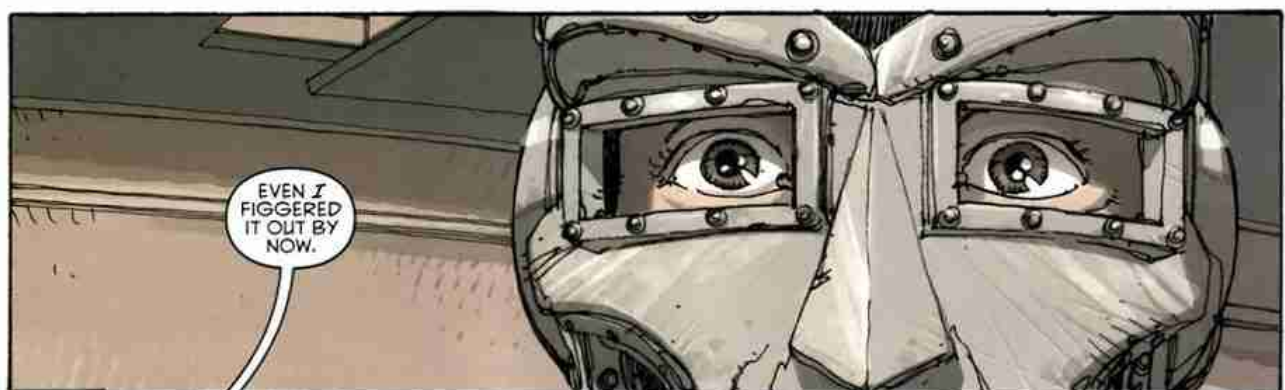


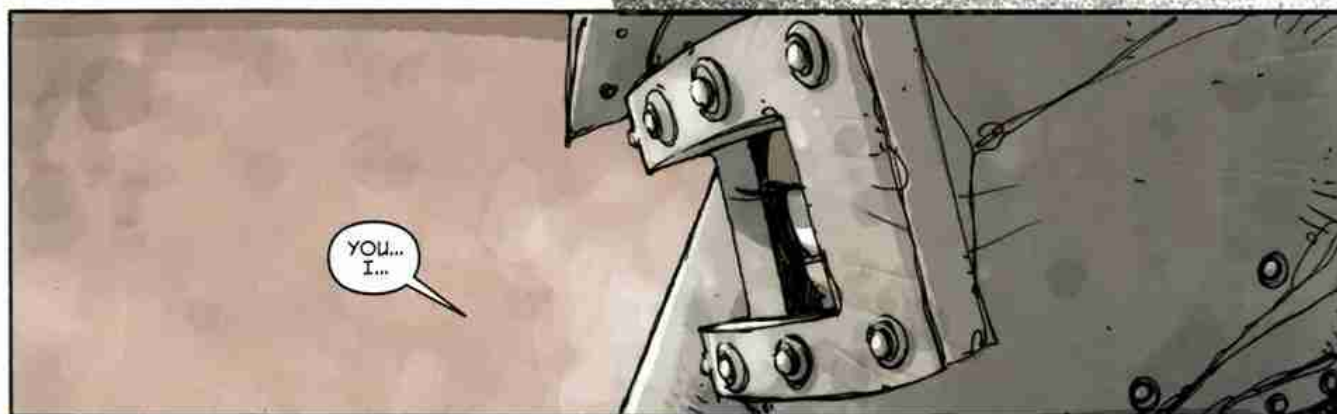
NO. THEY... THEY *ABANDONED* ME. WHEN THEY RETURNED FROM THAT OTHER WORLD, THEY NEVER... THEY *NEVER* SEARCHED FOR ME.

'COURSE WE DID... YA IDJIT.

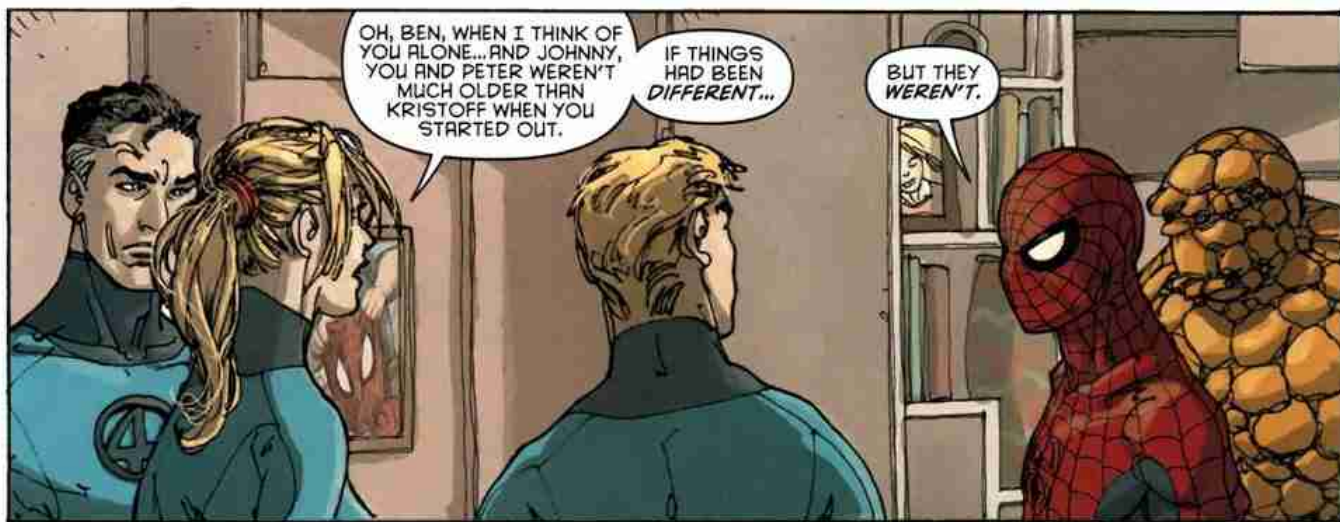
YA WEREN'T HERE. YA WEREN'T IN LATVERIA. WE LOOKED EVERYWHERE WE COULD THINK OF. AFTER A WHILE WE FIGGERED YA DIDN'T *WANNA* BE FOUND.

AND WE KEPT LOOKING ANYWAY.











...IT'S MORE THAN
POSSIBLE... CUZ
YOU'RE PART'A THAT
FAMILY, WEB-HEAD.

YEAH... THE
BLACK SHEEP!

